

SECRET The Call

ARTICLE APPEARED
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THE NEW YORK TIMES
12 May 1978

U.S. LEFTIST EDITOR SAYS CAMBODIANS ARE THRIVING

The editor of a Chicago-based Marxist weekly who led a delegation of Western reporters on a visit to Cambodia said yesterday that the Communist Government there had indicated to him that it would soon open the borders to similar visits by "unsympathetic" American reporters.

Acknowledging his own sympathy with the Communist Government, the editor, Daniel Burstein, painted a glowing picture of life under the Communists and said that published reports of widespread atrocities were the result of a "massive propaganda" effort by the Central Intelligence Agency. Those reports, based largely on accounts by Cambodian refugees, have portrayed a picture of mass killings and forced labor.

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Mr. Burstein, whose paper, The Call, is published by the recently formed Communist Party Marxist-Leninist, a Peking-oriented group, said that he and three of his reporters toured Cambodia April 22-29 after having arranged the visit during a trip to China.

The editor, accompanied by one of the reporters, David Kline, and a woman identified only as a representative of the Group of Kampuchean Residents in America, discussed his trip during a news conference at the New York Hilton.

Challenging refugee accounts of forced labor and repressions, Mr. Burstein said his group had traveled along more than 700 miles of Cambodian highways, visited numerous work sites and conducted random interviews without finding any evidence of coercion.